

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action that was mailed on October 25, 2004. Non-elected claims 2-5 and 9-17 are cancelled, without prejudice to their reassertion in this or a continuing application. Claims 1 and 6 are amended to clarify that the present invention is concerned with a method for controlling manufacture of a sheet material that is cut into a predetermined size, as disclosed *e.g.* in the last paragraph on page 9 of the specification. New claims 18-26 are based upon such disclosure as that reflected in original claims 9-17, with claim 18 however depending from claim 6. The new title of the invention proposed by the Examiner has been adopted by Applicants. No new matter is introduced by this Amendment. Claims 1, 6-8, and 18-26 are pending in the application.

Claims 1 and 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by JP 7-49197. The reference in question corresponds to US 4,949,607 (Yuito).

The Yuito disclosure describes a web control system for a web material cutting line in which a web drawn from a reel 12 is processed at a reservoir 23 or a leveler 24, after which the web is cut into a predetermined length.

In contrast, the present invention manufactures a sheet material or a processed product of a sheet material ***that is cut into a predetermined size***, by processing the sheet material or by performing predetermined operations on the processed sheet material. In other words, in the present invention the sheet material taken from the whole web is firstly cut into the predetermined size, and

thereafter the sheet material – already having the predetermined size – is processed or subjected to predetermined operations at each of processing operations or processing sections.

In the present invention, detection is carried out by sheet material detectors disposed at entrance and exits sides of each of the processing operations or the processing sections where the sheet material or the processed product of the sheet material enters and exits the processing operations or the processing sections. Detection in the present invention is necessary because the sheet has already been cut into a predetermined size before the sheet is subjected to processing operations. Detection in the present invention is conducted to confirm the passage of the sheet material at each entrance and exit of the processing operations or the processing sections.

It is clear that the purpose of detection in the present invention is different from the purpose of detection in the web control system of Yuito. Yuito fails completely to teach or even suggest detection of passage of a sheet material, which sheet material has been cut into a predetermined size, by sheet material detectors respectively disposed at entrance and exits sides of an operation section.

Claims 7 and 8 are patentable for the reasons discussed above, and additionally because Yuito fails to disclose or suggest detection of a sheet material by sheet material detectors respectively disposed at entrance and exit sides of an operation section for sorting the sheet material (claim 7) or of a branch path for sorting the sheet material being conveyed (claim 8).

Applicants respectfully submit that none of claims 1, 6-8, and 18-26 is drawn to subject matter that is disclosed or suggested by JP 7-49197. The Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the rejection of record and to pass this application to Issue.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Richard Gallagher (Reg. No. 28,781) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.


If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 

Marc S. Weiner, #32,181


MSW/RG/jmb
1982-0207P

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000